Abstract

Processing of data packets within a network element cluster having a plurality of network element nodes is described. The network element cluster has a cluster network address common to said plurality of nodes. Distribution decisions are determined for first data packets, a first data packet being a data packet initiating opening of a packet data connection to said cluster network address, according to predetermined criteria. For each node of the network element cluster those first data packets, which are to be processed in said particular node, are selected according to the distribution decisions. Node-specific lists about opened packet data connections for which a node is responsible are maintained, and using these node-specific lists second data packets, which are data packets relating to any opened packet data connection specified in a node-specific list, are processed. For each node of the network element cluster those second data packets, which relate to connections on the node-specific list of said particular node, are selected for processing.

Fig. 3